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Letter dated 30 July 2000 from the Permanent Representative of Iraq to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

On instructions from my Government, I have the honour to transmit to you herewith a letter dated 27 July 2000 from Mr. Mohammed Said Al-Sahaf, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Iraq. The Minister calls attention to Turkey's recent decision renewing the mandate of the so-called "Operation Northern Watch" in Turkish territory and to the implications of that decision for continued United States and British aggression in the illegal no-flight zones imposed on Iraq and for enhancing the power of collaborationist Kurdish parties in northern Iraq, as well as to the fact that Turkish forces are persisting with their recurrent violations of Iraq's territory. He requests you to intervene with the Turkish Government with a view to halting its aggression against Iraq and ensuring its respect for the norms of international law and for the country's sovereignty.

I should be grateful if you would have the present letter and its annex circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Saeed H. **Hasan**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

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Annex to the letter dated 30 July 2000 from the Permanent Representative of Iraq to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Further to my letter dated 20 July 2000 (S/2000/735, annex), I have the honour to refer to the recent decision of the Turkish Grand National Assembly, acting on the recommendation of the Government, to renew the mandate of the so-called "Operation Northern Watch" in Turkish territory for a further period of six months with effect from 30 June 2000. This will inevitably mean that the forces in question will continue their daily aggression against Iraq, and it will enhance the power of collaborationist Kurdish parties in northern Iraq to provoke internal problems on both sides of the Iraq-Turkey border.

Turkey has played a major role in jeopardizing Iraq's security and sovereignty, and it has done so by permitting United States and British aircraft to use its territory as a base from which to launch air raids on northern towns and villages that have caused large-scale losses in both material and human terms. For purposes of illustration, I should like to state that during the past six months, the period for which the forces' mandate to remain in Turkish territory was last renewed, the total number of armed sorties flown by United States and British aircraft in the area was 1,410. In the course of these sorties, the aircraft bombed villages, towns and civilian installations in northern Iraq and caused the death and injury of a large number of civilian residents, including children, older persons and women.

The scope of these acts of aggression has not been limited to this aspect alone, and they have begun to give expression to a deep-seated hatred of Iraq and to an insistence on destroying the country's infrastructure and undermining its economic basis. During the period in question, the aircraft concerned dropped 26 heat flares for the purpose of destroying crops, especially at harvest time. Renewal for the next six months therefore means further United States and British incursions, violations and outrages.

The continuing daily aggression against Iraq by United States and British aircraft is synchronized with the violation of Iraq's sovereignty by Turkish forces and their numerous raids on villages in northern Iraq on the pretext of being in pursuit of elements of the Kurdistan Workers' Party, which leave many dead and wounded among innocent civilians.

The entry of Turkish forces into northern Iraq is an integral part of the scheme directed against Iraq by the United States and the United Kingdom that has the purpose of undermining the country's sovereignty and territorial integrity and aims at the systematic and deliberate destruction of Iraqi lives, infrastructure and civilian installations, and these countries have turned the measures taken to enforce the no-flight zones into the appropriate instrument to achieve their hostile goals against Iraq.

The Government of the Republic of Iraq categorically rejects the two so-called no-flight zones, which were imposed by unilateral decision of the United States of America and the United Kingdom and lack any legal basis. Iraq rejects all the consequences of this illegal decision and, in particular, the flimsy excuses and pretexts used by these countries in an attempt to justify their military aggression against our country.

The Government of Iraq holds the Turkish Government fully responsible for the support it provides so that United States and British aircraft can take off from its territory to strike targets in Iraq and for the acts it commits to the detriment of Iraq's security and sovereignty. In accordance with the principles of international law, it reserves in full its right to seek compensation for the losses resulting from these actions.

In condemning these wanton acts of aggression, the Government of Iraq urges you to intervene with the Turkish Government with a view to halting its aggression and ensuring its respect for the norms of international law and the sovereignty of Iraq.

(*Signed*) Mohammed Said **Al-Sahaf**
Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Iraq